



**transport**

Department:  
Transport  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



## **Media Statement**

**DATE** : Monday, 2 March 2026

**TO** : All Media

**ATTENTION** : News Editors / Transport Reporters / All Reporters

**For immediate use**

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## **CREECY AND HLENGWA EXPRESS MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCES AFTER A MARITIME INCIDENT**

**PRETORIA:** The Minister of Transport, Ms. Barbara Creecy, and the Transport Deputy Minister, Mr. Mkhuleko Hlengwa, have expressed their condolences to the bereaved family after one life was lost at sea and five crew members missing following the sinking of the MW Leo vessel, near Mossel Bay.

### **DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT**

The MW Leo, registered under the Comoros flag, transmitted a distress signal reporting uncontrolled water ingress on the evening of 28 February 2026. At the time, the vessel was approximately eighty (80) nautical miles south of Mossel Bay, on a single voyage from Durban to Nigeria. The vessel is owned by the company called Magnet Energy Limited, based in Lagos, Nigeria.

The crew reportedly abandoned ship onto the vessel's liferafts, and the vessel subsequently sank in the early hours of 01 March 2026.

The vessel had a total of eighteen (18) crew members on board, all confirmed to be of Nigerian nationality. Twelve (12) crew members have since been rescued alive; One (1) body has been recovered, with five (5) crew members still missing.

### **INCIDENT INVESTIGATION**

A preliminary investigation has been initiated by the South African Maritime Authority (SAMSA).

The incident is being coordinated by the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) Cape Town.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria's High Commissioner, HE Tope Ajayi, is kept abreast of the developments on an ongoing basis.

Creecy and Hlengwa have expressed their pain and condolences to High Commissioner Ajayi who is grappling with this maritime incident, and emphasized the urgent need to find the missing crew members. They have also expressed messages of support to the families whose loved ones are still missing at sea.

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